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September 20, 1999

Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305)
Food And Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

RE DOCKET NUMBERS: 98N-1230, 96P-0418, 97P-0197

Dear FDA:

I am writing to express my concern over the extremely cruel farming practice of forced molting, where hens are starved for up to 14 days. This is done to millions of hens to manipulate egg production. Forced molting is so stressful it destroys the hens' immune system, predisposing the birds and their eggs to salmonella poison. The US Department of Agriculture's Food Safety & Inspection Service (FSIS) stated: "FSIS recognizes that public health concerns are raised by highly stressful forced molting practices. For example, extended starvation and water deprivation practices lead to increased shedding to Salmonella enteritis (Se) by laying hens subjected to these practices."

The FDA must do more than put bacteria warning labels on egg cartons and regulate egg refrigeration temperatures. You have the jurisdiction to ban unsafe farm practices, such as forced molting, that injure human health. I'm writing to urge you to ban the forced molting of egg laying hens because it's a primary cause of infectious diseases in hens, eggs, and consumers of the eggs. Please protect the public and help make the lives of millions of animals a little less hellish by banning forced molting.

Thank you for your time and attention to this public health and safety issue.

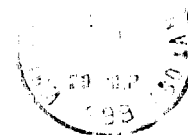Sincerely,

Ellen Emerson

Ellen Emerson

98N 1230

C 702

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION

CROSS REFERENCE SHEET

Docket Number/Item Code:

98N-1230/C702

See Docket Number/Item Code:

97P-0197/C703
96P-0418/C702

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